

This past weekend, nearly 100 high school students converged on Stevenson High School in Lincolnshire to participate in the First Annual 10th Congressional District Model Congress.

Students took on the roles of actual Representatives and participated in congressional hearings, “mark up” legislative sessions and floor debate. With Earth Day on Sunday, students also considered environmentally-themed legislation. H.R. 1 established U.S. policy toward climate change, and H.R. 2 authorized the creation of the 10th Congressional District Student Conservation Corps. Both bills passed the House. You can read the final text of H.R. 1 [here](#) and H.R. 2 [here](#).

In order to develop a broader understanding of global warming, the Representatives heard testimony from Michael Walsh of the Chicago Climate Exchange, Evan Craig from the Illinois Sierra Club, Suzie Schreiber of the Waukegan Harbor Citizen's Advisory Group, environmental leaders Donnie Dann and Wendy Abrams, and Stevenson High School teachers Andrew Conneen and Dan Larsen. I am grateful that these experts took time out of their busy schedules to discuss some of the most pressing environmental issues of the day.

It is always refreshing to see young people so passionate about their government. Of the attending students, I am certain that many will become future members of Congress, elected officials and community leaders.

I would to thank all of the students for participating, and in particular, our Majority and Minority Leaders. Ben Rose played Rep. Steny Hoyer (D-MD), Lauren Blake played Rep. Melissa Bean (D-IL) and Will McGauren played John Boehner (R-OH). These three students worked with their committee chairs and caucuses to develop amendments, introduce legislation and organize speeches on topics from global warming to veterans' health care to tax policy.

Although H.R. 1 and 2 were not based on legislation currently in the U.S. House of Representatives, I will work with the students to launch the 10th Congressional District's Student Conservation Corps based on their recommendations and input. Together, we'll develop a plan to engage students in a variety of environmental volunteer opportunities.

If you are a student or know one who might be interested in next year's Model Congress, please send me a [note](#) , and we'll be sure to add you to our contact list. It was an amazing experience, and we all look forward to the Second Annual 10th Congressional District Model Congress.

I encourage you to read a [summary](#) of the Congress that was written by Ilana Strauss, who played Rep. Lofgren (D-CA).



Congressman Kirk and the members of the First Annual 10th Congressional District Model





Congressman Kirk welcomes the newest members of the House of Representatives





Congressman Kirk swears in the First Annual 10th Congressional District Model Congress



Virtually every 10th District Congress (Will McGauren) and the rest of the Representatives are sworn in







Congressman Kirk speaks with representatives Costello (Jacob Klein), Moore Capito (Lauren





Michael Walsh of the Chicago Climate Exchange testifies before the Committee on Energy and Commerce





The Republican Conference meets to discuss H.R. 1 which will determine U.S. policy toward





The Democratic Conference listens to Representative Van Hollen (Austin Lin) during their caucus meeting.





Rep. McHenry (Jonathan Youshaei) speaks on the House floor.